Calculating the Graduation and Dropout Rates of Students with Disabilities

The Michigan Department of Education, Office of Special Education and Early Intervention Services (OSE/EIS) is required to report to the public the graduation rates and dropout rates of students with disabilities for each school district in Michigan. Data used to calculate graduation and dropout rates come from the Single Record Student Database (SRSD), maintained by the Center for Performance and Information (CEPI). As students with disabilities leave their school district, school district personnel report in the SRSD the exit status of each student (e.g., graduated, dropped out, moving to a new district, etc).

This brief explains how students with disabilities are recorded and tracked in the SRSD. Formulas used to calculate graduation and dropout rates are also presented. Finally, because of different reporting requirements mandated by the U.S. Department of Education, Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP), it is necessary to perform a crosswalk of some exit codes used in the SRSD.

How are graduation and dropout rates computed?

The OSEP developed the methodology required to calculate graduation and dropout rates for students with disabilities. The following formulas are required:

Graduation Rate =

$$\frac{\text{\# Graduated with a high school diploma}}{\text{\# Graduated with a high school diploma} + \text{\# Received a certificate/GED} + \text{\# Dropped out} + \text{\# Aged out} + \text{\# Deceased}}$$

This number is then multiplied by 100.

Dropout Rate =

$$\frac{\text{\# Dropped Out}}{\text{\# Graduated with a HS diploma} + \text{\# Received a certificate/GED} + \text{\# Dropped out} + \text{\# Aged out} + \text{\# Deceased}}$$

This number is then multiplied by 100.

Please note: Michigan serves students with disabilities through age 25. The OSEP formula reflects students through age 21. So the category "Aged Out" is zero (0) in Michigan.

How are SRSD exit data used to capture accurately all students with disabilities who exited during the 2005-06 school year?

The following steps were followed to record students with disabilities who exited special education programs and/or services during the 2005-2006 school year. Students with disabilities were identified as exiting special education or exiting their school district from July 1, 2005 through June 30, 2006.

1. Data on students with disabilities who were reported in the SRSD for the entire 2005-2006 school year were isolated into a special education database. This database contained a record of students with disabilities for the fall 2005, spring 2006, and EOY 2006 data submission periods.
2. Students with disabilities who exited special education programs/services between July 1, 2005 and June 30, 2006 were recorded as exiting special education.
3. Those students with disabilities who exited the school district, who had no exit data from special education were also identified and recorded as exited students.
4. Steps 2 and 3 (see above) were used to derive a list of all students with disabilities who exited special education during the 2005-06 school year.
5. The OSE/EIS is only able to capture those students with disabilities who were reported as exiting special education if school district personnel accurately reported this information in the students' SRSD record. If district personnel exited students with disabilities from the district, but failed to put this information in the students' SRSD record, the OSE/EIS would be unable to report the exit information for those students with disabilities.

How are SRSD exit categories aligned with the OSEP exit categories?

The OSEP requires States to track and report on students with disabilities who exited special education. Michigan must report in seven (7) exit categories. These categories include:

1. Graduated with a high school diploma
2. Dropped out of school
3. Enrolled in another district (i.e., moved to another district)
4. Died
5. Received a special education certificate of completion
6. Reached the maximum age for receiving special education programs/services[1]
7. Declassified - returned to general education

The SRSD allows district personnel to report 22 different exit reasons. Because the SRSD has more exit categories than OSEP allows, the MDE must transpose exit categories to the federal OSEP categories. The chart below provides the alignment between federal OSEP exit categories and SRSD exit categories.

OSEP Exit Categories	SRSD Exit Categories
Graduated with a high school diploma	01-Graduated with a general education diploma 02-Graduated, applied to college 03-Graduated from alternative program 04-Graduated, applied to non-degree program

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[1] The Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act (IDEA) requires special education services through age 21. In Michigan, special education services can continue through age 25. No Michigan students are coded as "reached the maximum age" in this IDEA report, because students are eligible to continue services beyond age 21 in Michigan.

OSEP Exit Categories	SRSD Exit Categories
Dropped out of school	05-Completed general education with an equivalency certificate 07-Dropped out of school 10-Expelled from school district 11-Enlisted in the military or job corp. 16-Unknown 18-Left adult education
Enrolled in another district (moved)	08-Enrolled in another district in Michigan 09-Moved out of state 13-Incarcerated 14-Enrolled in home school 15-Enrolled in nonpublic school 17-Placed in recovery or rehabilitation program
Deceased	12-Deceased

OSEP Exit Categories	SRSD Exit Categories
Received a special education certificate of completion	06-Completed general education with other certificate 20-Received a special education certificate of completion and exited K-12 system
Reached maximum age for special education	21-Reached maximum age for special education
Declassified (Returned to general education)	**Captured in two fields and two codes:** Field 45, code 22-Declassified, student exited special education and remains in the district Field 23, code 30-Exited early childhood Early On program

For example, SRSD exit categories 5, 7, 10, 11, 16, and 18 are combined to determine the total number of students with disabilities aged 14 – 21 who dropped out of school.